

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----102138 211519Z /41

O 211503Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7748
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL BELIZE NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 01209

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE INFORM ROWLANDS

FROM TODMAN

EO 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PBOR, GT, UK, BH, MX
SUBJECT: BELIZE: PRESENT MEXICAN POSITION

1. DURING VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO AND CABINET, ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN BRIEFED THE PRESIDENT ON U.S. VIEWS REGARDING THE BELIZE SITUATION AND SUGGESTED ESPECIALLY THAT, GIVEN GUATEMALA'S INSISTENCE ON SOME TERRITORIAL CESSATION AND THE INABILITY OF U.K. AND GUATEMALA TO REACH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, IT MAY BE TIMELY NOW TO SEEK HELP OF THIRD PARTY. HE HOPED MEXICO COULD AGREE AND SO INFORM BELIZE.

2. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID MEXICO ALSO HAS HISTORICAL RIGHT TO PART OF PRESENT BELIZIAN TERRITORY BUT GIVES PRIORITY TO BASIC INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES INCLUDING SELF-DETERMINATION OF BELIZIAN PEOPLE. MEXICO HAS NO TERRI-
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TORIAL AMBITIONS AND WOULD FOREGO ITS CLAIM BUT WOULD INSIST THAT ANY SOLUTION BE BASED ON THOSE PRINCIPLES. MEXICO THOUGHT SOLUTION SHOULD BE BE DEALTWITH IN A RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL BODY AND IN ANY CASE MUST BE BASED ON PRINCIPLES MENTIONED ABOVE AND SHOULD BE FORMULIZED. HE HAD INSTRUCTED FOREIGN MINISTER ROEL TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN ANY NEGOTIATION THAT TAKES PLACE IN

ACCORDANCE WITH THOSE PRINCIPLES.

2. TODMAN AND AMBASSADOR LUCEY MET LATER WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ROEL, VICE MINISTER DE OLLOQUI, AND AMBASSADOR MARGAIN. TODMAN BRIEFED GROUP FULLY ON HIS JANUARY 19 CONVERSATION WITH PRICE (MEXICO 01188) AND SAID THAT IN VIEW OF PRICES'S EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER SOME TERRITORIAL CESSION, IF GUATEMALANS ARE PREPARED TO DROP TREATY, HE WONDERED WHAT MEXICO'S POSITION WOULD BE.

3. ROEL RECALLED LOPEZ PORTILLO'S EARLIER STATEMENTS STRESSING HIS IMPRESSION THAT SETTLEMENT HAD TO COME THROUGH FORMAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION. HE EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS, HOWEVER, TO REVIEW WHOLE MATTER SHOULD GUATEMALA SHOW SOME MOVEMENT AWAY FROM INSISTENCE ON A TREATY WHICH BELIZE COULD NEVER ACCEPT.

4. ROEL RECALLED U.N. RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF BELIZE'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, BUT ADMITTED THAT TERM, "TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY" WAS MORE FLEXIBLE THAN TERM, "WITHIN ITS HISTORICAL BOUNDARIES" WHICH BELIZE AT FIRST TRIED TO HAVE INCLUDED IN THE U.N. RESOLUTION.

5. TODMAN NOTED THAT SINCE BRITISH AND GUATEMALANS SEEMED UNABLE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON SOLUTION SATISFACTORY
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TO BELIZE, IT APPEARED THAT BEST NEXT STEP MIGHT BE TO INTRODUCE SOME INTERMEDIARY TO HELP IN SEARCH FOR SOLUTION. HE RECALLED THAT IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS EARLIER IN THE WEEK, ROEL HIMSELF HAD MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF MEDIATOR BEING USED NOW.

6. ROEL ACKNOWLEDGED HE HAD SPOKEN IN FAVOR OF INTERMEDIATOR AND SAID MEXICO HAD EARLIER OFFERED MEDIATE AND WAS STILL WILLING TO DO SO BUT HAD BEEN TOLD THAT AS AN INTERESTED PARTY, IT COULD NOT QUALIFY. MEXICO WILLING TO CONSIDER SOME OTHER MEDIATOR IF ALL PARTIES AGREED.

7. TODMAN SAID U.S. WAS NOT TRYING TO INTERJECT ITSELF INTO THE SITUATION BUT LIKE MEXICO WE BELIEVED IT IMPORTANT FOR THERE TO BE A PEACEFUL, NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE SAID PRESENT MOMENT SEEMED PROPITIOUS, PRIOR TO CHANGE IN GUATEMALA GOVERNMENT. IF SERVICE OF SOME AMERICAN COULD BE HELPFUL AS MEDIATOR, WE WOULD BE WILLING TO SEE AN AMERICAN SERVE IN THAT ROLE AND WONDERED HOW MEXICANS WOULD REACT.

8. ROEL QUESTIONED WHETHER GUATEMALA PRESIDENT LAUGERUD WAS ANY MORE ABLE TO SETTLE QUESTION THAN HIS SUCCESSOR MIGHT BE. HE SAID, IN ANY CASE, MEXICO WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER AN AMERICAN AS INTERMEDIARY. HE EMPHASIZED IT BEST TO MOVE AWAY FROM TERM, "MEDIATOR" TO TERM "NEGOTIATOR" WHO WOULD TRY TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER. ROEL CONCLUDED THAT WHEN MORE WAS KNOWN ABOUT GUATEMALA'S ATTITUDE WITH REGARD TO TREATY, MEXICO AND U.S. COULD DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER.

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AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BELIZE NIACT IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

9. TODMAN SAID HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING THIS ISSUE WITH GUATEMALA ON JANUARY 22 AND WOULD INFORM ROEL. LUCEY

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Message Attributes

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